Chapter III. Population. Depressed Classes. *Ágers.*

**A'gers** or SALT-MAKERS, from *ágar* a salt-pan, numbering 2118 of whom 1078 were males and 1040 females, are found at Kumta, Chandávar, Gokarn, Hannalli, Sánikat, and Mirján in Kumta; at Shirur in Honávar; and at Gundbali and Ankola in Ankola. The names in common use among men are, Bomma, Nágu, Jetti, Mhásti, Venkta, Timma, Honna, and Bira; and among women, Devi, Sukri, Nági, Timmi, Jogi, and Jettu. They have no stock names except names called after places or crafts. Their household god is an unhusked cocoanut. They have no subdivisions. Both men and women are middle-sized and dark. Their home tongue is Kánarese. They live in small one-storied houses with mud walls and thatched roofs, and verándas and front yards. Their common food is rice and fish, but they eat flesh and drink liquor though they do not touch beef. Their special dishes are fowls and sweet-gruel or *páisa* with liquor. They are great eaters but poor cooks. The men wear the loincloth, a coarse narrow waistcloth worn without passing the skirt between the legs, a blanket, and a headscarf. The women wear no bodice, and the robe, which is generally dark, falls like a petticoat without the skirt being passed between the feet. The men wear gold or brass earrings and finger rings; and the women the lucky necklace, glass tin or brass bangles, and gold or brass earrings, noserings, and finger rings. Only a few have a store of holiday clothes. They are hardworking and orderly. Their hereditary calling is making salt, and they also work as field-labourers and make palm-leaf umbrellas which the people of Kánara use at all times of the year. Like the Buttals and other field labourers, they are generally indebted to the landowners and work off loans by serving on very low wages. They rank above Kotegárs and about the same as Uppárs. Their daily life does not differ from that of Mukris or fishermen. A family of five spends about 8*s.* (Rs. 4) a month. Their family god is Hanumant. They worship all village gods and goddesses who are represented by stones and white ant-hills. All their ceremonies are performed by their headman or *kolkár*. They do not employ Bráhmans though they treat Havigs with great respect. They have much faith in soothsaying, witchcraft, and in the spirits of the dead, and keep *Holi* in March, *Yugádi* or New Year's Day in April, *Chauti* in August, *Ganpati's* day in September, and *Tulsi's* wedding and *Diváli* in November. They have no images in their houses. They make no pilgrimages except occasionally to Gokarn during the *Shivarátra* holidays in February. Their girls are married between ten and twelve and their boys between fourteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised; polyandry is unknown. Their customs are like those of the Uppárs, except that a betel-palm blossom is fixed in the bridegroom's turban or headscarf instead of a marriage coronet, and that the marriage ceremony lasts for six days. Their social disputes are settled at meetings of adult castemen under a headman styled *budvant*. They live from hand to mouth and show no signs of improving their condition.

*Bákads.*

**Ba'kads** or **Bakadigarus**, numbering 262 of whom 129 were males and 133 females, are found only at Ankola. The word *bákad* is

said to come from the Hindustáni *bák* a crop estimate, because their wages are paid in grain and not in cash. They call themselves Bants or warriors. The names in common use among men are, Honnappa, Devappa, Pursappa, Birappa, Timmappa, Hammayya, Lingappa, Devendra; and among women, Lakshmi, Devamma, Sukri, Ávi, Gune, Gungamma; and Ráni. Their family god is Bantdev whose shrine is at Amdalli in Ankola. They say they came from Bantvál, a village near Mangalor, and that they were once Bants, whom Buchanan[1] describes as the chief middle class or *Shudra* husbandmen in South Kánara, and that they were put out of caste and have no intercourse with the parent stock. Bant in Kánarese means a warrior and they still take the word *náik* after their names. In South Kánara they are large landowners. They are middle-sized, dark, and strong. Their home speech is Kánarese pure from Sanskrit words, and spoken with a better accent and articulation than the Kánarese of other low classes. They live in small one-storied houses with-mud walls and thatched roofs, verandas, and front yards. Their furniture is mats, earthen cooking vessels, and brass lamps. Their common food is rice *rági* and fish, and they eat flesh but do not drink liquor. Their favourite holiday dish is sweet-gruel or *páisa*. They are great eaters, fond of fish, beaten rice, cocoanuts, and molasses. The men wear the loincloth, a narrow waistcloth, and a headscarf, with a country blanket or *kambli* on their shoulders; the women wear the skirt of the robe hanging like a petticoat from the waist and the upper end drawn over the shoulder and breast and no bodice. They buy clothes once a year, the new clothes serving as holiday garments. The men wear gold or brass ear or finger rings and silver girdles; and the women wear, besides the signs of married life, brass or tin bangles and gold or brass rings in their ears and on their fingers and toes. They are clean, honest, sober, thrifty, and hardworking. They earn their living chiefly as husbandmen. Most of them are well-to-do and their condition is better than that of the other degraded classes. Some of them own land. They rank with Kotegárs and Mukris, and their daily life does not differ from that of the Hálvakki Vakkals, the women and children helping the men in the field. A family of five spends about 14*s.* (Rs. 7) a month. They worship all village deities and employ Bráhmans to whom they show great respect. Their chief holidays are *Shimga* in March, *Dasra* in October, and *Bhánd* or car festivals, and they have great faith in soothsaying and witchcraft. The object of their special devotion is Venkatramana of Tirupati where they go on pilgrimage. They also worship unhusked cocoanuts. They marry their daughters between eight and ten and their boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed, and polyandry is unknown. They either burn or bury their dead. They engage Havig *bhats* to perform their birth, marriage, and death ceremonies.

[1] Mysor, III. 17, 32. He calls them Bantars, divides them into Massadis, Jains, and Parivaradus, and notices that they eat and drink but do not marry with Nairs, that their headmen or *mokastas* inherit through women; and that the men have several wives one of whom must be the daughter of the husband's maternal uncle.

Chapter III. Population. DEPRESSED CLASSES. *Bákads.*

At their ceremonies the *hom* or sacred fire is not burnt. They mourn the dead ten days, during which, as well as for ten days after birth, they hold themselves impure and are cleansed by a mixture of soda and ashes with water which is supplied by the village washerman. Their ceremonies differ in no important point from those of the Komárpáiks. Social disputes are settled by hereditary headmen or *budvants*. Serious breaches of caste rules are punished by excommunication, and small offences by fine, part of which is credited to their family god and part spent in feasting caste people. They are a steady but not a rising class, and do not send their boys to school.

*Beds.*

**Beds** or **Talva'rs,** according to the 1872 census numbered 967 of whom 521 were males and 446 females. They are found above the Sahyádris. They are the well known Bedars or Byádarus who are believed to be of Telugu origin. They seem to be a branch of the Maisur Bedars with whom they eat and marry.[1] The names in common use among men are, Durga, Mari, Yellappa, Karjanna,

[1] Of the Maisur Bedars or Byádarus, Buchanan (1800, Mysor, I. 358-360) gives the following interesting details: Baydarus are of two classes Karnátas and Telingas. The Karnátas wear the *ling* and are numerous near Raya-durga. Those in the north-east of Maisur are of Telinga descent and speak Telugu. They are the true Shudra or local cultivators and military of Telingana and were introduced in great numbers into the south when the south was conquered by the Andhra or Telingana princes. Karnáta and Telinga Bedars neither eat together nor intermarry. Telingas eat together but marry only in certain families. They have nobles called Chimalas and social heads called Gotugarus. They belong to the class who are called Pálegárs or Sausthánikas. They are soldiers, hunters, and husbandmen. They eat fowls, sheep, goats, hog, deer, and fish, and drink liquor. Polygamy is allowed and practised. The women are hardworking, and marry at any age. Widows are not killed but they do not marry again. They bury the dead. They believe that after death the wicked become devils and the good are born as men. The spirits of unmarried men or *Virikas* come back, and if not worshipped get angry. The Virikas' shrine is a rough heap of stones, and the object of worship an oiled shapeless stone. The Baydarus become religious or Dáseris in sickness. Their god is Trimalla Devaru, an immense block of granite on a hill-top. Under one side is a hollow painted red and white, a rude stone is in the hollow, and a Satánana or Vaishnav Gurav is the ministrant. Once a year the Baydarus meet at Trimalla's shrine. The ministrant offers the god food and hands it to the worshippers. Trimalla is the name of the hill at Tripatti on which Venkatram's temple is built. The Baydarus pray to no mother or female power except to the goddess of small-pox Marima that is Mari-amma the mother of death. To her they offer animal sacrifices. Their Teacher is a Shri Vaishnav Bráhman who marks the worshippers and gives them holy water. The Bráhman village priest acts at their marriage and memorial feasts. Buchanan (Mysor, III. 163) held that the Kadambas of Banavási were Baydarus. He notices (Mysor, I. 29) that in east Maisur the Baydarus were strongly Telugu and that near Velur on the crest of the Eastern Ghats the Telugu language was called Bedari. They ranked (Mysor, I. 77) among the left-hand classes. He notices (Mysor, III. 6) that in South Kánara the Bedars are a savage race who eat cats and with great propriety were called murderers. Wilks (1810, South of India, I. 447) makes the Boyas and Bedars the same. He describes them as wonderfully enduring and (Mysor, II. 190) as by their admirable staunchness to their chiefs winning the admiration of Haidar Ali who turned them into Musalmáns and formed battalions of the Bedar Boyas or *chelás*. Mr. Rice (1876, Mysor and Coorg, I. 331) gives them a strength of 260,000; calls them Bedars or Nayaks and also Kirátakas, Bárikas, and Kannaiyas. Some are Karnátas and others Telingas. They have family stocks or *gotrams* like Bráhmans. Most Maisur Pálegárs or petty chiefs are Bedars. The Bedars or Baidarus are of importance in the Bombay Presidency. They are numerous in the Kánarese upland districts, Dhárwár Belgaum and Kaládgi, and under the name of Rámushis pass north through Kolháp ur and Sátára to Poona and Sholápur even to Ahmadnagar. Like shepherd or Kurubaru and husbandman or Kunbi the name Baidaru probably includes many early tribes who differed from each other in origin, appearance, and position.

Mallya, Bassya, Hanma, and Ráma; and among women, Mallava, Yellavva, Bassavva, Hanmavva, Kanchavva, and Bharmavva. Names marking the calling or the place of birth are used as surnames, such as Kattadavaru or Catechu-makers, Yemmeyavaru or Buffalo-keepers, and Koreyavaru apparently a place name. Their family deities are Rámnáth whose shrine is at Siddápur, and Yellamma whose shrine is at Saundatti in Dhárwár. Both men and women are short, dark, and muscular. Their original home tongue is said to have been Telugu, but they now speak Kánarese in a singing tone like the Lingáyats. They live by themselves in small houses with mud walls and thatched or tiled roofs. Their common food is rice and *rági*, but they eat almost any animal including the cow, buffalo, rat, and monkey, and drink liquor. The men wear either short drawers or a loincloth, a shouldercloth, and a head-scarf; and the women a bodice and the robe with the skirt hanging from the hips to the shins like a petticoat and the upper end drawn over the shoulder and across the breast. The men wear rings of gold or brass in their ears and on their fingers; and the women wear the lucky necklace of glass beads, glass tin or brass bangles on their wrists, and gold or brass rings in their ears and nose and on their fingers. They are brave and hardworking but thriftless and fond of drink. They formerly lived either as hunters and fowlers or as village watchmen and guards. They are now husbandmen and field labourers and some of them inferior village servants. They are fond of drink and are badly off. They do not rank so low as Holayás, Kotegárs, and Mukris. Both men and women work as labourers. They take a meal in the early morning before starting for work, rest for about two hours about midday when they eat the remains of their breakfast, and have a third meal on their return home after dark. A family of five spends about 12*s.* (Rs. 6) a month. Their chief god is Venkatramana of Tirupati in North Arkot; and they also worship *virikas* or bachelor spirits. They employ Joishis to perform their ceremonies and show them much respect. They keep *Holi* in March, *Yugádi* in April, *Ganesh-chaturthi* in September, *Hatti* or *Dipaváli* in November, and all other Hindu feasts. They have images of Parshurám and Yellamma in their houses. Girls are married between eight and fourteen and boys between twelve and twenty. Widows are not allowed to marry, but they are taken as concubines. They bury the dead and give caste feasts on occasions of birth, naming, marriage, puberty, and death. Their social disputes are settled by their headmen. They do not send their children to school and are neither a rising nor a pushing class.

*Bellers.*

**Bellers,** numbering 10 of whom 3 were males and 7 females, are found in the petty division of Bhatkal. They perhaps take their name from *bale* bamboo-fibre. They are a branch of the Holayás but they neither eat nor marry with them. Both men and women are short, stout, and well-featured. Their home speech is Kánarese. They live in small one-storied houses with mud walls and thatched roofs and verandas and front yards. Their staple diet is rice and fish. They also eat carrion and drink liquor. The men wear the loincloth, a narrow waistcloth like the Buttals, a shouldercloth or

Chapter III. Population. Depressed Classes. *Bellers.*

black blanket, and a headscarf; the women wear the robe like a petticoat; they have no bodice and cover the bosom with strings of beads. The men wear gold or brass earrings and finger rings, and the women the lucky necklace of glass beads, glass tin or brass bangles, and gold or brass earrings, noserings, and finger rings. They are orderly but thriftless and given to drink. Like the Kotegárs they skin animals and make bamboo mats and baskets. They are badly off. They rank with the Kotegárs and do not differ from them in their daily life. A family of five spends about 8*s.* (Rs. 4) a month. They worship all village gods and goddesses, and offer them blood sacrifices. They are firm believers in soothsaying and sorcery. They pay Bráhmans great respect, but do not employ them to perform their ceremonies. Girls are married either before or after they come of age. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed, and polyandry is unknown. Caste disputes are settled by headmen called *budvants* with the help of a council of adult members. They do not send their children to school and show no signs of improving.

*Buttals.*

**Buttals** or Basket-makers, according to the 1872 census numbered 91 of whom 76 were males and 15 females. They are found in small numbers on the coast. The name seems to come from the Kánarese *butti* a basket. They neither eat nor marry with other impure castes. Both men and women are short, dark, and regular featured. Their home speech is Kánarese. They live in small one-storied houses with mud walls and thatched roofs, a veranda, and front yard. Their staple diet is rice and they eat all sorts of flesh except beef, and drink spirits when they sacrifice to the village gods and at any other time when they can afford it. The men wear the loincloth, a narrow waistcloth covering only the thighs, a shouldercloth, and a headscarf. The women wear no bodice and pass the skirt of the robe back between the feet. The men wear gold or brass earrings and finger rings; and the women the lucky necklace of glass beads, glass tin or brass bangles, and gold or brass earrings noserings and finger rings. They are hardworking and orderly. Both men and women work as field labourers. They are often little better than bondsmen, working off advances made to themselves or to their fathers, in some cases even their grandfathers. Like the Kotegárs they are deemed impure. Their daily life does not differ from that of the Mukris. A family of five spends about 8*s.* (Rs. 4) a month. They worship all village gods and goddesses but their chief object of veneration is Jatga. They believe in soothsaying and witchcraft, and have a great dread of the spirits of the dead. They respect Bráhmans but do not employ them to perform any of their ceremonies. Their girls are married between ten and thirteen and their boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage and polygamy are common, and polyandry is unknown. Their marriage ceremony, which is the same as the Chámbhár marriage, is performed by their headmen who are called *kolgars* or sceptre-holders, and who settle their caste disputes. Their state is wretched and they show no signs of improving it.

*Chchalvddis.*

**Chchalva'dis** or **Channayan Holeyarus,** according to the

1872 census numbered 1864 of whom 978 were males and 886 females. They are found at Sirsi, Banavási, and Mulgi in Sirsi; at Mundgod in Yellápur; and at Haliyál. The usual names among men are, Gutti, Ira, Barma, Gurva, Suba, Basva, and Fakira; and among women, Lingi, Basvi, Fakiri, and Chimni. They are believed to have come from Dhárwár where some of their class are said still to be found. They are of three divisions Chchalvádis proper, Kaudis, and Kamblers, who eat together but do not intermarry. The men are dark, sturdy, middle-sized, and dull in face; and the women are much like the men except that they are regular featured. All talk Kánarese and a few Hindustáni. They live in dirty untidy huts with mud walls roofed with bamboo and straw. Their usual food is *rági* rice and fish. They never touch beef or pork, and flesh of any kind is rarely used owing to its cost; the men are fond of smoking tobacco and hemp and of drinking spirits. They are moderate eaters and bad cooks. Their holiday dishes are sweet-gruel or *páisa*, *holige*, and cooked meat. The men wear a short waistcloth, a shouldercloth, and a small headscarf; the women pass the skirt of the robe back between the feet and draw the upper end over the head. They tie their hair in a knot behind the head and seldom use flowers except on holidays. The men wear a small gold ring in the left ear and the women ear-studs, earrings, and a necklace of glass beads and another of inferior gold silver and glass bangles and gold finger rings. They are hardworking and orderly but dirty, and the men are fond of drink. They are temple servants in Lingáyat temples or *gudis* and monasteries or *maths*, the men carrying bells which are rung during service and in processions. The women sweep temples, and like the Devlis many are unmarried and prostitutes. They are badly off, borrowing money to meet marriage and other special expenses and often serving as bondsmen till the debt is paid. They rank with Mukris, Kangáris, and other low classes, but they do not marry with any of them. Their hours of work are from six to eleven and from two to six. They take their breakfast in the morning before going to work; they dine at noon, and sup about eight. The women mind the house. A family of five spends about 8*s.* (Rs. 4) a month. They are a religious people. They respect Bráhmans but their family priests are Lingáyat *ayyas* who perform their religious ceremonies, officiating at births, marriages, and deaths. They have no house gods, but worship Shiva, Basava, Yellamma, and Maridevi, making pilgrimages to their shrines at Ulvi in Supa, at Sirsi, and at Gokarn. They are careful to keep the chief Hindu festivals. They pay tithes to the head of the Shringeri monastery in Maisur who is their spiritual Teacher. They are a religious class and offer flowers, cocoanuts, and oil to the village gods. They believe in ghosts, and consult mediums or *bhagats* generally during epidemics, when offerings of fruit and flowers are made to local deities. The mediums are usually paid 6*d.* (4 *ans.*). There is no rule requiring the early marriage of girls, but girls are generally married before they come of age, and boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised. Ceremonies are performed on the fifth day after birth, and the child is named and cradled on the eleventh

day. The child's head is shaved when two years old. Their marriage ceremonies begin the day before the marriage when the bridegroom and bride are rubbed with turmeric paste. On the wedding day the bridegroom comes with his people to the bride's house and is received by his parents-in-law at the entrance to the house and seated on a mat spread in the veranda. The bride is brought out and the pair stand face to face, separated by a curtain. The curtain is soon after withdrawn, their hands are joined by the bride's parents; water is poured over their hands, and the bridegroom's mother fastens the lucky necklace round the bride's neck. Women sprinkle rice on the brows of the couple and wave lighted lamps round their faces; the Lingáyat priest blesses them, and dinner is served. Next day after dinner the bridal party go to the bride's house where the guests are feasted. When a girl comes of age the same ceremony is performed as among the Chámbhárs. Those who can afford it burn their dead the rest bury. They mourn ten days, feed their caste people on the eleventh, and the next of kin performs a ceremony on the anniversary of the death-day. Social disputes are settled by a headman or *budvant* who is of their own caste and whose office is hereditary. He has power to fine 2*s.* to 4*s.* (Re.1-Rs.2) and is highly respected. They do not send their children to school, improve their condition, or take to new pursuits.

*Hatgárs.*

**Hatgárs,** according to the 1881 census numbered 16 of whom 11 were males and 5 females.[1] They are found on the Dhárwár frontier. Both men and women are dark, short, and sturdy. Their Kánarese resembles the home tongue of the Banjigs. They live in small one-storied houses with mud walls and thatched or tiled roofs and small front verandas. Their staple diet is rice and millet. They eat flesh when they sacrifice to the gods, and drink liquor, but as a class they are temperate. The men wear short drawers, a narrow waistcloth, a shouldercloth, and a headscarf; and the women the robe, the skirt hanging like a petticoat and the upper end drawn over the head like a veil. They also wear a bodice with short sleeves and a back. They are thrifty, hardworking, sober, and orderly. They are husbandmen, landholders, tenants, and field workers. Besides minding the house the women help the men and add to the family earnings by working in the fields; after ten the boys herd cattle. They are not successful as husbandmen, and are badly off, as the Dhárwár frontier, where they live, suffers from irregular rainfall. They rank with the Bákads and Hálvakki Vakkals, and above the classes which are considered impure. Their daily life does not differ from that of other husbandmen. A family of five spends about 10*s.* (Rs. 5) a month. Both men and women wear the *ling* in a case hung round their necks, like the Banjigs and other Lingáyats. They venerate Lingáyat priests but employ Joishi Bráhmans to perform their ceremonies, and pay their chief devotion to Amba Bhaváni whose shrine is at Tuljápur in the Nizám's

[1] It seems probable that these Hatgárs are an outlying settlement of the shepherd class known in the Maráthi Deccan as Dhangars, or more generally Hatgár-Dhangars.

dominions, where they go on pilgrimage. They have great faith in soothsaying, witchcraft, ghosts, and evil spirits. Their spiritual Teacher is the head of the Smárt monastery at Shringeri and their chief holidays are the feasts of Amba Bhaváni and Yellamma. They marry their girls between seven and twelve and their boys between twelve and eighteen, but age is no bar to marriage. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised; polyandry is unknown. Some of them burn and others bury the dead. Social disputes are settled in accordance with the opinion of the majority of the castemen at meetings held under headmen called *gaudás*. They do not send their boys to school and take to no new pursuits.

DEPRESSED CLASSES.

*Hatgárs.*

**Haslars,** according to the 1881 census numbered 2629 of whom 1414 were males and 1215 females. They are found in isolated settlements in Sirsi and Honávar. The word Haslar seems to come from the Kánarese *hasula* a child, in the sense of servant. Like Mhárs and Chámbhárs they live on the skirts of towns and villages. They seem to have come from Shimoga in north-west Maisur, where the caste is found about 5000 strong speaking the same language and following the same customs as the Kánarese Haslars.[1] They belong to three family stocks, Bettaballi or cane-men, Honaballi or gold-men, and Ánuballi or elephant-men. They have no surnames. The names in common use among men are, Huliya, Bola, Jette, Kariya, and Bira; and among women, Kottu, Jetto, Shivi, Puti, Yidi, and Mari. Families belonging to the same stock do not intermarry. They have no family gods. They seem to have the same origin as the Bákads or Holayas though they neither eat together nor intermarry. They are short, dark, and stoutly made with flat noses and thick lips. Their home tongue is Kánarese of a less pure type than that spoken by Bráhmans. They live in small one-storied houses with mud walls and thatched roofs. Their ordinary diet consists of rice-gruel for breakfast, *rági*-gruel for dinner, and cooked rice strained dry with curry for supper. They eat mutton, fowls, wild pig, and venison, and are excessively fond of palm-spirit. They do not touch beef or use opium or any other intoxicating drug. Flesh is mostly eaten on New Year's Day or *Yugádi* in April, on *Dasra* in October, and on *Diváli* in November. The men wear the loincloth, a country blanket across their shoulders, and a headscarf; and the women a bodice and the robe whose skirt is worn falling like a petticoat. They wear brass hair ornaments, the nose-ring, the lucky necklace, glass bangles, and brass wristlets and toe-rings. Their clothes come from the Belgaum and Dhárwár hand-looms, and they keep a store of rich robes and on grand occasions the women deck their hair with flowers. Most men and women work as labourers in fields and gardens. They are paid both in cash and grain, the men getting 6*d.* (4 *ans.*) and the women 3*d.* (2 *ans.*) a day; some of them take land

*Haslars.*

[1] Rice's Mysor, I. 350. Mr. Rice (Ditto, 351) describes the Shimoga Haslars as like the Soligás of south-east Maisur, a short thick-set race very dark and curly haired. They are timber-cutters and work in betelnut and spice gardens. Their home speech is Kánarese.

Chapter III. Population.

DEPRESSED CLASSES.

*Haslars.*

on lease from superior holders. After ten boys help their parents, working in the fields or watching cattle, and, after seven, girls mind the house when their mothers go to work. In spite of fair wages they save little, and as they borrow £4 to £6 (Rs. 40-Rs. 60) for their weddings they have to work for long terms for their creditors, getting little more than nominal wages. They rank with Mukris above Mhárs and Holayas and below Hálepáiks. High class Hindus do not touch them. They work all day from sunrise to sunset except short intervals for their meals, and generally go to rest about eight. A family of six spends about 14*s.* (Rs. 7) a month. Their houses cost £1 to £3 (Rs. 10-Rs. 30); and their dress costs a grown person 3*s.* to 5*s.* (Rs. 1½-Rs. 2½) a year, and a child 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* (8-12 *ans.*). They spend about £2 (Rs. 20) on a birth and 8*s.* (Rs. 4) on a death. They worship none of the regular Hindu gods; they have no family gods or priests, and they make no pilgrimages. They please the spirits of the dead whom they believe to have the power of harming them. They offer them cocks, sheep, and fruit, and have much faith in soothsaying and witchcraft. They trace all disease to the working of unfriendly spirits against whom, when they become unusually troublesome, they employ wizards or *ghádis*. Their customs do not differ from those of the Mukris and other impure Kánarese-speaking castes. Hereditary headmen called *budvants* settle petty disputes, and serious matters are disposed of at meetings of the caste under the headman. Except for eating with a lower caste, which is punished by temporary excommunication, the usual punishment is fine varying from 1*s.* to £1 12*s.* (8 *ans.*-Rs. 16). The proceeds of the fine are spent on a caste feast. They do not send their children to school.

*Halálkhors.*

**Hala'lkhors** or **Bhanghis** according to the 1872 census numbered 36 of whom 27 were males and 9 females. They are a mixed class composed of Central Indian scavengers and local outcaste women. They are found in Kárwár, Kumta, Sirsi, and Haliyál. All have come within the last thirty years and they still come in small numbers. The word Halálkhor is derived from the Persian *halál* clean or lawful and *khor* eater, apparently because to them everything is lawful food. They admit outcastes from all castes and creeds. The names of men are, Kálu, Lála, Ayta, Munda, and Bindra; and of women, Shita, Ganga, Rada, Putli, and Ganpi. Both men and women as a class are tall, wheat-coloured, and regular featured. The home speech is Hindustáni. Most of them live in small huts with wattled reed walls and thatched roofs, which they set up in outlying parts of towns or villages. Their every-day food is rice and fish, but they eat beef and other flesh and drink liquor. The men wear the waistcloth, a jacket or coat, and a headscarf; and the women a short petticoat, a bodice with sleeves and a back, and a piece of cloth like a veil which is tucked in at the waistband of the petticoat and passed over the left shoulder. The men wear gold or brass ear and finger rings, and the women gold or brass nose and ear rings, the lucky necklace, glass tin or brass bangles, and gold or brass finger rings. They are hard-working and orderly, but thriftless and given to drink. They are employed as scavengers and perform the lowest duties including

acting as hangmen. They earn 16*s.* to £1 4*s.* (Rs. 8 - Rs. 12) a month, but are thriftless and extravagant, always in debt and borrowing money at high interest. They are the lowest class of Hindus ranking below Mhárs and Kotegárs. Both men and women go out to clean privies early in the morning and return about eleven and spend the rest of the day in eating and drinking till they go to bed about seven. A family of two spend about £1 (Rs. 10) a month. They bow to a church or a mosque, and reverence Hindu gods, but have no family gods, no shrines, and no religious Teacher. They observe deaths and marriages only by feasting their people, their favourite dishes being flesh and spirit. They have no headman and no social organization.

*Holayás.*

**Holaya's,** according to the 1872 census number 696 of whom 380 are males and 316 females.[1] They are found above the Sahyádris. They are said to have once been a warlike race and to have ruled the Karnátak. In South Kánara they are called *Ranar* or kings.[2] The home tongue of the Holayás is Kánarese. They perform mean offices such as scavenging. They have no subdivisions. They are dark, middle-sized, and strongly made, and in spite of their degraded condition have an air of manliness. Their home speech is Kánarese which is spoken in a singing tone. They live in huts or small houses with wattled reed or mud walls and thatched roofs, which they set up outside of towns and villages. The larger towns have several streets of Holaya houses along which a Bráhman never passes. Their common food is rice and millet, but they eat beef, fowls, mutton, pork, and game when they offer blood sacrifices and at any other time when they can procure them. The men drink

---

[1] The Holayás seem to belong to the earliest tribes of which traces remain in Southern India. Buchanan (1800, Mysor, I. 352-353) found in Sira in North Maisur two classes of Whalliarus or Holayars, Karnatás who were Vaishnavs and Morasus who worshipped Kála-Bhairav. He considered the Pariárs of the Tamil country, the Whalliarus of the Karnátak, and the Maliwanhis of Telingána the same. They ate together but did not intermarry. The highest class was the Morasu Holayars who tilled, weaved, and smelted iron. (Ditto, I. 313-315). In South Kánara as many as 47,300 Whalliarus are returned in 1800 as land-slaves. (Ditto, III. 7). Sir W. Elliot (1869, J. Eth. Soc. Lond. I. 103; compare Capt. Mackenzie, Ind. Ant. II. 65) inclines to make the Kánara Holiár a Whalliaru which in early Kánarese is written Poliyár, and the Tamil Pulaiyar, the same word, and to derive both from *hola* land or soil. Bráhmans spell the name Holeya that is unclean, taking advantage of the fact that *holu*, apparently the same as *hola*, like the English soil, means both earth and dirt. Sir W. Elliot makes them Holayars, remains of the early race to whom the Deccan impure classes and the Konds and Gonds belong. In proof that in Maisur the Holayarus are sons of the soil, that is are the earliest remaining race, Captain Mackenzie (1873, Ind. Ant. II. 65) notices that the village watchman who is a Holayar by caste settles boundary disputes and receives a burial-fee. Mr. Rice (1876, Mysor, I. 347) notices that in Maisur the Holayars are the lowest of the right-hand castes as the Mádigas or leather-dressers are the lowest of the left-hand castes; that there are two classes of Maisur Holayars, Telingas and Karnátas, who eat together but do not intermarry; and that there are four Holayar classes in Kurg, the Kembattis and the Máringis from Malabár, the Kukkas from South Kánara, and the Badagas or northerners from Maisur. All used to be slaves and are devoted to demon worship (Mysor and Coorg, III. 213).

[2] According to tradition, Parshurám's Bráhmans were driven out by low-class chiefs, one a Mogayar or fisher the other a Holayar. In later times, though the two stories perhaps belong to the same event, the Kadamba or Mayurvarma Bráhmans about A.D. 700 were driven out by a Holayar chief named Nanda and were brought back by Nanda's son. (Buchanan's Mysor, III. 163). According to another tradition (Rice's Mysor, I. 194) the Kadambas of Banavási destroyed Hubásiga, the king of the mountain Chandálas and annexed his dominions.

Chapter III. Population.

DEPRESSED CLASSES.

*Holayás.*

fermented palm-juice and spirits, being great eaters and bad cooks. Their favourite dishes are *holige* or baked cakes and mutton with spirits. The men wear the waistcloth, the shouldercloth, and the headscarf; and the women wear a bodice with short sleeves and a back, and a robe, whose skirt hangs like a petticoat, and the upper end is drawn over the head. The men wear gold or brass ear and finger rings, and the women gold or brass nose and ear rings, the lucky necklace, glass and brass or tin bangles, and gold or brass finger rings. They are hardworking and orderly but thriftless and fond of drink. They are scavengers and field labourers. As scavengers they carry away dead cattle and skin them, selling the hides and horns like the Mhárs and Kotegárs. They also work as sweepers and are paid 10*s.* to 14*s.* (Rs. 5-Rs. 7) a month. As field labourers they are paid in grain or if in cash men get 6*d.* (4 *ans.*) and women 3*d.* (2 *ans.*) a day. They are very poor and live from hand to mouth. They hold the same position as Marátha Mhárs, below Hálepáiks and Komárpáiks. When engaged as field labourers men and women go to work at dawn and return about eleven. They dine and go back to work about one, come home at sunset, sup, and go to sleep about seven. A family of five spends about 12*s.* (Rs. 6) a month. They worship the local village gods and goddesses offering them blood sacrifices. Their chief deity is Venkatramana whose shrine is at Tirupati in North Arkot. They pay Bráhmans great respect but do not employ them to perform their ceremonies. Their spiritual Teacher who is called Kempu Nullari Ainavaru, lives in Tirupati. They marry their girls when young, but child marriage is not compulsory. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised, and polyandry is unknown. They bury their dead and mourn ten days during which they consider themselves impure. On such grand occasions as marriage they feast their whole caste. An hereditary headman, called *gottaga*, performs their ceremonies and settles their disputes. Offences against the community, such as adultery either by men or by women, and eating in lower caste houses, are punished by fine. The fine is spent in buying liquor which the castemen drink. They do not send their children to school or take to new pursuits.

*Kusals*

**Kusals** are found at Murdeshvar, Shiralli, and Bailur in Honávar. Only one man of this class is entered in the 1881 census returns. They take their name from two Kánarese words *kasu* a child and *alu* a labourer, apparently because they are descended from children who have been bought and brought up as house servants. They are said to have come from Maisur. They belong to six family stocks, Honnaballi, Chandaballi, Kolorballi, Bhanyarballi, Holiballi, and Shadiballi. Families belonging to the same stock do intermarry. The names in common use among men are Jetti, Bira, Soma, Mangla, Shuka, Budha, Guruva, and Shanivara. In language, condition, and customs they do not differ from the Haslars.

*Korárs.*

**Kora'rs** or **Korga'rs,** according to the 1872 census numbered 239 of whom 116 were males and 123 females.[1] They are found in

[1] According to Buchanan (Mysór, III. 100) the Korárs once ruled South Kánara under a chief named Hubashika. He describes them in 1800 as wearing little but a bunch of grass, eating beef and offal, and worshipping a stone called Buta. He also

Chapter III. Population. Depressed Classes. *Kotegárs.*

of whom 129 were males and 79 females. They are found in small numbers above the Sahyádris in the Sirsi, Siddápur, Mundgod, Yellápur, and Haliyál sub-divisions. They are said to have once been a strong clan whose original seat was in the Karnátak uplands. They are also found in South Kánara where they hold a good position among middle class Hindus. Both men and women are middle-sized, dark, and muscular. The names in common use among men are, Karia, Guttia, Bassia, Durga, and Fakira; and among women, Durgi, Gutti, Demi, and Fakiri. They have no surnames or family gods. People of the same descent on the father's side intermarry. There are no subdivisions. Their home speech is Kánarese spoken with an accent like that of the Banjigs. They live in small huts plastered with mud and thatched with straw, in isolated villages at some distance from high class Hindus. Their furniture consists of mats and earthen pots. Their every-day food is rice, but when they can get it they eat any flesh, even the flesh of animals found dead, and drink spirits, their favourite dishes being cooked meat and sweet-gruel or *páisa*. The men wear a short waistcloth the end of which is not passed between the legs, a shouldercloth, and a headscarf, and the women a bodice with short sleeves and a back, and a robe with the skirt hanging like a petticoat from the waist to the knees and the upper end drawn over the head like a veil. The men wear gold or brass ear rings and finger rings and the women gold or brass nose and ear rings, the lucky necklace of glass beads, glass brass or tin bangles, and gold or brass finger rings. The clothes are brought from Belgaum and Dhárwár hand-looms, dark red and yellow being the women's favourite colours. They are hardworking but rough, improvident, dirty, and fond of drink. They are employed in burying paupers or strangers, sweeping the streets, carrying torches, acting as guides, in removing and skinning dead animals, in basket-making, and in selling firewood and grass. The men earn about 6*d.* (4 *ans.*) a day and the women about 3*d.* (2 *ans.*). They borrow to meet their wedding charges, and most of them are deep in debt. In the early morning they go to some open raised spot and watch the vultures to see if any animal has died during the night. If they find a carcass they skin it and take home the hide, horns, and flesh. The women cook the flesh and the men take the skin to the hide-market, generally a barren plot of land near a Chámbhár village. The skins fetch 1*s.* to 6*s.* (8 *ans.*-Rs. 3), and the horns of a buffalo 6*d.* to 1½*s.* (4-12 *ans.*). The Kotegár thinks the Chámbhár's touch is impure. In a bargain between a Chámbhár and Kotegár the hide is laid at the bottom of a tree and the Chámbhár takes it up and pays for it. On receiving the money the Kotegár walks to a tavern, has a drink, and goes home to the dish of flesh which his wife has made ready. He passes the rest of the day in sleeping or quarrelling with his neighbours or with his wife. When they get no carcasses both men and women make baskets and mats. The ordinary monthly charges of a family of five are about 8*s.* (Rs. 4). They worship the village gods and goddesses, especially Maridevi the cholera goddess, offering blood sacrifices and having strong faith in sooth-saying, witchcraft, and ghosts. They respect Bráhmans and ask

small numbers at Kumta, Monki, Shirali, Bhatkal, Murdeshvar, and other villages and towns. Under the names Koragas, Koramas, and Korachas they are found in Maisur and Coimbatur. Another branch, named Korárs by Buchanan, occurs in South Kánara where they live in the depths of the forest, and until lately wore no clothing except a leaf apron. The language of the South Kánara Korgárs is a mixture of Telugu and Tulu. The North Kánara Korgárs are middle-sized, very dark, and strongly made, with slightly projecting jaws, high cheek-bones, and sloping foreheads. Their Kánarese does not differ from that spoken by other people. They live in wretched huts, with mud walls and thatched roofs, and their only furniture is straw mats, blankets, earthen cooking vessels, and earthen lamps. Their common food is *rági*, rice, and fish, but they often eat dead cattle and always drink to excess. The men wear the loincloth, a narrow waistcloth the end of which is not passed between the feet, a blanket over their shoulders, and a coarse cloth wrapped round the head. The women wear the robe falling from the waist like a petticoat. They have no bodice but wear a number of strings of red beads. They also wear a lucky necklace of glass beads, glass brass or tin bangles, and gold or brass earrings, noserings, and finger rings. The men wear gold or brass ear rings and finger rings. They are orderly, but thriftless and given to drink. They skin dead animals and sell the hides to Chámbhárs. They also plait bamboo baskets and mats, work as field labourers, and sweep the streets and otherwise act as scavengers. They are wretchedly poor being always in debt. They are a low class ranking with and living in the same way as the Kotegárs. A family of five spends about 12*s.* (Rs. 6) a month. They worship all village gods and goddesses and have strong faith in sorcery, soothsaying, and ghosts. They make no pilgrimages, do not employ Bráhmans, and have no family gods. Their girls marry between ten and fourteen, and their boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Marriage and other ceremonies are performed by the headman of their caste who is called *budvant*, the marriage ceremony consisting in tying the ends of the bridegroom's and bride's garments, joining their hands, and pouring water over them. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised; polyandry is unknown. Disputes are settled by their headman, who has power to call caste meetings to settle social disputes. Serious transgressions are punished with loss of caste and ordinary offences by fine, the proceeds being spent in buying liquor which is drunk by the caste. They are badly off and do not seem likely to improve, as they neither send their boys to school nor take to new pursuits.

*Kotegárs.*

**Kotega'rs** or **Metris**, according to the 1881 census numbered 208

(Mysor, I. 249) mentions the Koramas or Kormarus of Maisur, an impure class who made baskets and carried salt, and the Koravans, a wild tribe of Coimbatur (Ditto, II. 336), Mr. Rice (Mysor, I. 312, 350, and III. 214) names them Koragas, Koramas, and Korachas. He describes them as thieves and robbers, moving with droves of cattle and asses carrying salt and grain and making bamboo mats and baskets. They speak Telugu and Tamil and are said to use a gypsy language of their own. The men wear the hair in a bunch on one side of the head like figures on memorial-stones; the women wear strings of red and white beads and shells falling over the bosom; in the forest they are said to wear nothing else.

them to fix the proper time for marriages, but do not employ them as priests. Girls are married between ten and fourteen, and boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed, and polyandry is unknown. A child is named and cradled on the fifth day after birth, the ceremony costing from 1*s.* to 2*s.* (8 *ans.*-Re. 1). Boys when six months old have their heads shaved. A wedding lasts for six days. On the first day the boy and girl in their own houses are rubbed with cocoanut oil, bathed, and dressed in new clothes. On the second and third day no ceremonies are performed except daily feasts. On the fourth day the boy is decked in holiday clothes, adorned with the wedding coronet, and led to the girl's house where a small booth is raised, and the ceremony is completed with the same details as at a Chámbhár's wedding. The boy is kept two days at the girl's house and on the sixth day he returns to his house with his bride. A dinner is given and the girl is made over to her husband. A marriage costs about £2 (Rs. 20). The dead are buried and mourned ten days. The eleventh is kept as a day of purification, some cooked rice being left at night on the grave for the dead. No death day is observed. A headman called *metri* or *gaudas* settles disputes and performs caste ceremonies. Breaches of caste rules are punished by the *metri* and a council of adult castemen. The usual punishment is fine, the amount being spent on liquor. They do not send their children to school and show no sign of raising their position.

*Kangáris.*

**Kanga'ris,** according to the 1881 census number about 245 of whom 125 are males and 120 females. They are found in small numbers at Konolli in Kumta, and are said to have come from Vijayanagar in Bellári. They have neither surnames nor family gods. The names in common use among men are, Jetti, Ganpa, Bira, Sukra, Ira, and Badva; and among women, Shivi, Lingi, Kottu, Jettu, Mari, and Iri. They are a branch of the Chchalvádi caste, but they neither eat nor marry with them. The men and women closely resemble the Bellers and Mukris. They speak Kánarese and live in houses like those of the Holayás. Like the Hulsvars and other impure castes they feed on carrion, and most of them drink to excess. They are orderly and hardworking, but thriftless and given to drink. They work as husbandmen and labourers. Their regular calling is to gather the skins and horns of dead cattle. A cow's or a bullock's skin fetches 2*s.* to 6*s.* (Re. 1-Rs. 3) and a buffaloe's skin 4*s.* to 8*s.* (Rs. 2-Rs. 4). Their earnings though irregular are considerable and they are above want. They rank with Mhárs and Kotegárs and are not touched by high class Hindus. A family of three adults and three children spends about 10*s.* (Rs. 5) a month. Their houses cost 10*s.* to £2 (Rs. 5-Rs. 20); their goods and chattels about 10*s.* (Rs. 5); and they spend £3 to £6 (Rs. 30-Rs. 60) on their marriages. Their chief object of worship is an unhusked cocoanut which represents their deceased ancestors and is kept in the corner of their house on a raised platform. They do not rear the basil plant, but reverence Virabhadra whose temple is at Chandávar in Honávar. They have strong faith in soothsaying and in the power of evil spirits, and believe that when angry the spirits of the dead come and plague them. They also worship the

Chapter III. Population. Depressed Classes. *Kangáris.*

village gods to whom they present blood offerings, fowls, pigs, sheep, and goats, which they afterwards eat. This is done on the *Dasra* day in October and at the local *Bhánd* or car festivals. Their holidays are, *Sankránt* in January, *Shimga* in March, *Yugádi* or New Year's Day in April, *Dasra* in October, and *Dipaváli* in November. Women during their monthly sickness are held impure for four days and all the members of the family for ten days after a birth. Girls are generally married before they come of age; but exceptions occur. Polygamy and widow marriage are allowed; polyandry is unknown. A day or two before marriage an elder from the bridegroom's house goes to the bride's and settles how much the bridegroom has to pay for his wife. They ask a Havig Bráhman to fix the time for holding the nuptials and pay him 6*d.* (4 *ans.*), two pounds of rice, and a cocoanut. On the wedding day a feast is given both at the bride's and at the bridegroom's. After dinner the bridegroom with his house people and guests starts for the bride's wearing the marriage coronet of pith and holding in his hand a couple of betel leaves and betelnuts. On reaching the marriage booth the bridegroom pays his father-in-law the amount agreed and is led to a bench in front of which he stands. The bride is brought and placed opposite him separated by a curtain held by two men. The headman calls aloud *Sávadhán* or take care, and the curtain is withdrawn. The bride's father and mother join the hands of the pair and pour cocoanut-milk over them. The bride's maternal uncle ties the skirts of the couple's robes who walk into the house and bow to the bride's house god. Supper is served and next day the party returns to the bridegroom's, where a feast is given. The ceremony ends with a dinner on the third day. They bury the dead, and mourn three days. At the end of the three days they are purified by the washerman, who gives them a mixture of ashes and water to drink. On the twelfth day cooked rice and palm-liquor are laid for the dead near the grave and caste people are feasted. Some one of the same sex and age as the dead is given a robe or waistcloth, and is fed on the thirtieth day of every month till a year has passed. They have hereditary headmen called *budvants*, who, aided by caste councils, enforce social discipline, fining for minor breaches of custom and putting out of caste for ever or for a time any one who breaks the more important rules. They do not send their children to school or take to new pursuits.

*Mukris.*

**Mukris,** according to the 1881 census numbered 4984 of whom 2503 were males and 2481 females. They are found along the coast between Kumta and Honávar in small numbers, at Herouta, Valgulli, Handguna, Talgod, Dhareshvar, and Gokarn in the Kumta sub-division; at Honor, Mairukurol, Hosákulli, Haldipur, and Chandávar in the Honávar sub-division; and at Ankola in the Ankola sub-division.[1] Their family-god is Virabhadra of Hegda in Kumta, and their home tongue is Kánarese. They have neither stock names nor surnames, but they add the word *halli* or

[1] In a list of the people of South Kánara, in 1800, Mokaris or boatmen are returned at 687 (Buchanan, III. 6).

*mukri* to their names. The names in common use among men are, Bolla, Jetti, Bira, Maru, Durgu, Lingu, and Nágu; and among women, Mari, Kanni, Jettu, Shivi, Yenki, and Lingi. They have no subdivisions. Both men and women are stout, short, and dark, with slightly projecting jaws, retiring foreheads, and irregular features. Their Kánarese does not differ from the home tongue of the Hálvakki Vakkals. They live in isolated villages in small huts with mud walls and thatched roofs, and have little furniture except mats and earthen cooking vessels. Their food is *rági*-gruel eaten with dried fish, and boiled rice saturated with cheap fish curry. Both men and women drink liquor and eat flesh except that they do not touch beef or pork. Their special dishes are beaten rice or *povás* with molasses and plantains, and rice cooked with cocoanut milk and molasses called *páisa*, and fowl made into curry. They do not lay by provisions but bring daily supplies from the market. They are moderate eaters and bad cooks. The men wear a loincloth with a large number of twisted cotton or silk cords fastened with a knot round the waist, a blanket on their shoulders, and a headscarf; and the women wear the robe hanging from the hips to the shins without passing the skirt between the feet. They wear no bodice, but draw the upper end of the robe over the shoulder. The men wear gold or brass rings in their ears and on their fingers, and the women the lucky necklace of glass beads, glass tin or brass bracelets, and gold or brass rings in their ears nose and fingers.

They are hardworking and well-behaved, but thriftless. They are field labourers and makers of shell lime. Most of them are employed by Havig Bráhmans in their spice gardens and are bound to labour for a term of years, for life, or for several generations, in return for money advanced to meet marriage expenses; some also work as labourers and take contracts to dig wells and reclaim or level land. When money is borrowed from the landlord, a man generally binds himself by a written agreement to pay interest at ten to fifteen per cent. If he is unable to pay, he generally works a certain number of years for the landlord in return for the money and interest. They earn only enough for their bare maintenance, many depending on the higher classes of Hindus, especially on Havig Bráhmans, for funds to meet the expenses of their marriage ceremonies, in return for which they have to serve their creditors for long periods. In such cases they are required to work during the rainy season when tilling operations are carried on, and receive from their employers rice for their maintenance and a suit of clothes. During the fair months they are free to work on their own account. They have a low social position ranking with the Kotegárs, Ágers, Asades, and Kangáris. Both men and women go to work by sunrise taking with them some cold food left from the previous evening. They return about noon, dine, again go to work at two, and come home at sunset, sup about seven, and go to bed. A family of five persons spends about 10*s*. (Rs. 5) a month.

They worship village and Bráhman gods. They have no religious Teacher and do not employ Bráhmans though they show

Chapter III. Population. Depressed Classes. *Mukris.*

them much respect. Their chief deity is Virabhadra, whose shrine is at Hegde in Kumta, where, in January, the whole caste meets at the yearly festival of the god. The temple servant at Virabhadra's shrine is a Mukri. Next to Virabhadra they honour Venkatramana and Hanumanta of Chandávar in Honávar. They call Hanumanta *gurudevaru* the divine teacher. Each Mukri family pays 1½*d.* to 2*d.* (1-1¼ *ans.*) to Virabhadra and Hanumanta regularly every year through their headman, and they keep wooden images of Virabhadra and Venkatramana in every pot or hollow pillar of sweet basil. The images are bathed and daubed with yellow clay or *gopichandan* every day before meals. After bathing the gods, the worshipper walks several times round the sweet basil plant bowing to it as well as to the sun. After this they pluck a leaf of the plant and dip it in a metal water-pot set at the feet of the image of Virabhadra and let the water drop from the leaf into their mouths. Their leading holidays are *Makar-sankránt* on January 12th, *Shimga* in March, *Yugádi* in April, *Mahálpaksha* in September, *Diváli* in November, *Bhándibhabha* local hook-swinging festivals, and *Teru* or car festivals. They make pilgrimages to Chandávar in Honávar and to Tirupati near Madras. Those who go to Tirupati are called *dásas* or slaves of the god, and are treated with much respect. All lay by small sums of money as offerings to Venkatramana and either take or send the amount.

Girls are generally married before they come of age, but custom does not strictly enjoin early marriage. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised and polyandry is unknown. The marriage ceremonies last four days. On the day before the ceremonies begin the eldest man in the bridegroom's house accompanied by friends goes to a Havig priest, asks him to fix the time for performing the ceremony, and gives him six pounds of rice, a cocoanut, and 6*d.* (4 *ans.*) in cash. They then go to the house of the girl and ask her parents, laying in the father's hands a betelnut folded in a couple of betel leaves, and they also fix the price of the girl which varies from £2 to £3 4*s.* (Rs. 20-Rs. 32). Then the girl's father distributes cocoanut-kernel and molasses and the bridegroom's party withdraw. Early next morning from the bride's and the bridegroom's messengers are sent to ask the caste people to the wedding. When the guests come they are seated on mats spread on the ground in the marriage booth. Special respect is shown to the headmen of the caste by seating them by themselves in a raised part of the booth with an attendant standing behind them. When the guests have come the bridegroom is dressed in a narrow waistcloth, a shouldercloth, and a headscarf. He takes in his hand a couple of betel leaves, and holding a cocoanut in his hand, bows to the family god which is an unhusked cocoanut, and to the sweet basil plant, and breaks a cocoanut before each of them. When this ceremony is over all present go in procession with the bridegroom to the house of the bride. On reaching the bride's, her parents lead the bridegroom into the marriage booth where he crawls under the low arched branch of a fig tree, and, while women sing Kánarese songs,—he is bathed with water from two large earthen pots placed on either side of the arch. When the bathing

is over, the bridegroom is seated on a low wooden stool. Cooked rice, fish curry, vegetables, and sweet gruel are served. In the evening a large quantity of toddy or fermented palm-juice is set before the guests, and both men and women drink freely and dance moving in a circle to the sound of the pipe and drum. When the liquor is finished and the dancers are worn out the headman ties the ends of the bride's and bridegroom's garments, joins their hands, and pours water over them. After this the bride and bridegroom retire for the night and sleep in the same place. Next day the pair go to the bridegroom's house where they are feasted with palm-juice and sweet gruel, rice, and fish curry. On the fourth day the bridal party return to the bride's house where a feast is given. This ends the ceremony. The headman or *budvant* is given four pounds of rice and a cocoanut, and his messenger or *kolkar* gets two pounds of rice and half a cocoanut. When a Mukri girl comes of age she is bathed on the fifth day, dressed in new robes, and decked with brass ornaments and flowers. Female neighbours are treated to a meal, the chief dish being rice mixed with cocoa-kernel and molasses. On the occasion of a birth, as soon as the child is born, both the child and the mother are bathed, and then the child is fed with a decoction of cummin seed sweetened with molasses, and its mother with a porridge of onions, *kálgirge* or bitter cummin seed, pepper, cummin seed, molasses, and tender leaves of *jambi* Xylia dolabriformis. This diet is continued for two days. On the third day the floor of the house is cowdunged and all the inmates bathe and wash their clothes. The mother is then given a little spirits, and neighbours' children are feasted with cooked rice strained dry, fish curry, rice, bread, and palm-liquor.

They bury the dead, and mourn three days. On the third day after the death all adult male neighbours come to the house of mourning. The chief mourner cooks a small quantity of rice without salt, strains it dry, dissolves a little tamarind in the water, bakes three rice-cakes, and brings some palm-beer. Then with the guests he goes to the grave taking with him some of the food and lays it near the grave as an offering, and stays there till the cakes are eaten by crows. When the men start for the grave the women begin to cowdung the floor of the house and finish the work before the men come back. On returning, the mourners and the guests bathe in cold water, take a little of the cakes and other eatables, and go to their houses. On the eleventh day all the caste people in the village are invited, those who are relations bringing with them different kinds of eatables. The people of the house cook dry rice, fish curry, and sweet gruel, and lay in a stock of palm-juice. Portions of everything cooked in the house as well as of what has been brought by relations, are spread on a plantain leaf and given to a cow. After this all the guests and house people dine together and drink palm-beer. On every new-moon day a cow is fed with rice, curry, and sweet gruel to please the dead. This is done also once a year on All Souls' Day.

They have hereditary group-heads or *bárkas*, and village-heads or *budvants*, each of whom has an attendant or *kolkar*. Their settlements are arranged into forty groups and the groups into four

Chapter III. Population. Depressed Classes. *Mukris.*

divisions. The four divisions are, Hebbankeri in Honávar with eighteen groups; Hegde in Kumta with six groups; Kumta with seven groups; and Gokarn with nine. The village-heads or *budvants* who are subject to the group-heads or *bárkas* have power to call and preside over caste councils, to enquire into breaches of caste rules, and to punish offenders in accordance with the opinion of the majority of the members. The decisions are enforced on pain of loss of caste. The gravest social offence is to beat a casteman with a sandal, or to incur a sandal-beating from a man of another caste. The punishment for beating or being beaten is a fine varying from 2*s.* to £1 12*s.* (Re. 1-Rs. 16). Of this amount three-quarters are spent on a caste feast. The remaining quarter is paid to the manager of Hanumánta's temple who keeps 6*d.* (4 *ans.*) for himself and places the rest to the credit of the temple funds. When he receives his share of the fine Hanumanta's priest gives a little of the water in which the idol has been bathed. The offender, whether the beater or the person who is beaten, is taken to a river and after bathing is given some holy water, part of which he drinks and part he rubs on his body. The caste is then feasted with palm-beer, rice, curry, and sweet gruel. A Mukri who eats with a person of lower caste, or a Mukri widow who becomes pregnant, are turned out of caste. The widow's paramour has to pay a fine and to undergo special purification. On paying the fine, which is spent in the same way as the fine levied on a man who has beaten or been beaten with a slipper, the offender with one or more castemen, goes to Gokarn where his head and face with the top-knot and moustaches are shaved by a casteman. After he is shaved he is bathed in the sea, and then led to the temple of Mahábaleshvar, where, for the use of the priest, he lays on a plantain-leaf two pounds of rice, a cocoanut, and a copper coin. On returning to the village he again bathes in the presence of two caste people and passes through seven temporary cadjan huts which are burnt as soon as he passes through them. When the huts are completely burnt the offender drinks water brought from Hanumanta's temple and joins some castemen in a dinner. Adultery by married women is punished by severe beating at the hands either of the husband or of the next-of-kin. Insult to a headman or improper conduct at a public meeting is punished with fine up to 2*s.* (Re. 1), the amount being spent in the same way as the fine levied in a sandal-beating or widow-pregnancy case. Once in two or three years the caste meets at Honjikatta near Chandávar in Honávar. Every man has to take with him 6*d.* (4 *ans.*), six to eighteen pounds of rice, and a cocoanut. The meeting lasts three to ten days according to the business to be settled. At these meetings offenders against social discipline are tried, and important matters touching the welfare of the community are discussed. They are badly off and do not seem likely to improve.

*Mhárs.*

**Mha'rs,** who are also called Hulsvárs and Parvárs, according to the 1881 census numbered 8713 of whom 4732 were males and 3981 females. They are found along the coast in Honávar, Ankola Kumta, and Kárwár, their chief centres being Honávar, Kumta Ankola, Bhatkal, and Kárwár. The names of men are, Punu, Ganu Nago, Shivu, Savant, Omaya, Vasu, and Goinda; and of women

Káveri, Nagu, Gopi, Nani, and Gauri. They have neither stock names nor surnames, but they have local names. Their family deities are Sántariamma, Maridevi, Bhumidevti, and Mahádev, whose shrines are at Kumta, Honávar, Ankola, and Kárwár. They have no subdivisions. Both men and women are tall, fair, and regular-featured. They can speak Kánarese but their home speech is Konkani. They live in very small houses, with mud walls, thatched roofs, narrow verandas, and courtyards, standing in groups on isolated spots on the skirts of villages and towns. Their staple diet is rice and animals that have died a natural death, and they are excessively fond of drinking palm-juice and country spirits. Their breakfast, which is cold rice prepared the previous evening, is taken at six in the morning, their dinner of rice and carrion or fish at noon, and a similar meal at nine at night. Their special dishes are sweet rice gruel and fowl curry. They are neither good cooks nor great eaters. They dress like Chámbhárs. Men wear gold or brass earrings and finger rings, and women the lucky necklace of glass beads, glass tin or brass bangles, and gold or brass earrings, noserings, and finger rings. Most of them have some good clothes in store. They are orderly but thriftless and drunken. They gather the skins and horns of dead animals; plait bamboo mats and baskets; clean towns and villages; and play kettle-drums at *bhánd* and car festivals. The hangman belongs to this caste. They are very poor and have hardly any credit. They rank with Kotegárs. High class Hindus hold them impure. When a high class Hindu and a Mhár meet, the Mhár has to go to a distance as there is pollution even in his shadow. Their daily life does not differ from that of the Kotegárs. A family of five spends about £1 (Rs. 10) a month. They worship all village gods and goddesses, offering them blood sacrifices, and firmly believing in soothsaying and sorcery. They keep, but with no great care, the *Shivarátra* in February, *Holi* in March, and *Ganpati's* day in August. Though considered impure they are careful not to marry with any other class. Girls are married between eight and fourteen, and boys between sixteen and twenty-five. Widow marriage and polygamy are allowed and practised; polyandry is unknown. They divide the proceeds of the sale of the hide and horns among all who were present when the animal was found. They perform the *satti* ceremony on the fifth day after a birth, and after consulting a Bráhman name the child on the sixth day. Their marriage ceremonies last five days. On the first morning, at their own houses, the boy and girl are rubbed with turmeric and bathed by the women of the family. Then the marriage coronet or *báshing* is fastened to the boy's brow and he goes in procession to the girl's house. Here the boy and girl sit on a mat, the ends of their garments are tied, and some women of the house throw on their faces rice dipped in turmeric water brought from a Bráhman's, and untie the knot. This completes the marriage. The coronet is removed and the guests and the married couple are treated to a dinner of rice, curry, and sweet-gruel. The bridegroom returns to his quarters after dinner, taking his bride with him. On each of the next two days a dinner of sweet gruel is served in the bridegroom's house. After this the couple return